Reviewer’s report

Title: Cytomegalovirus Infections among African-Americans

Version: 1 Date: 9 March 2008

Reviewer: Liliane Grangeot-Keros

Reviewer’s report:

This study deals with: i) the prevalence of cytomegalovirus infection in African-American children and, ii) their possible sources of infection.

Specific comments

Methods (discretionary revisions)

Why isn’t the number of subjects tested indicated in the paragraph “study population”?

Results

- Page 5: (minor essential revision) It is said that CMV seropositivity and age were determined for 113 adults. If we refer to Figure 1, results were reported for 103 adults. Can the authors explain this discrepancy (or typing mistake?)?

- Page 6: (discretionary revisions) Why aren’t the data shown regarding the relationship between the CMV seropositivity rate of the index subjects and the mothers or the female caregivers?

- In Figure 1, it would have been more informative to represent CMV seropositivity for each year of age, unless the number of subjects is too low to do so. The text of this paragraph refers to Table 2, but in this table the age of the children is not shown (minor essential revision).

Discussion

Page 9: The authors say that “few” African-American children in this current study attended day care. How many children is meant by “few”? Is the number of children attending day care really too low to take this parameter into account?

Do they authors know if the same type of study has recently been performed in Caucasian children? A comparison of recent data concerning Caucasian and African-American children would be interesting in order to see if the same decline in the seropositivity rate is observed for Caucasian children and, if so, to analyze the reasons why.

Minor remark

Even though SES might a very common abbreviation (?), it would certainly be helpful to explain its meaning.

In total
This study is worth publishing even though I do think that information could be added by comparing CMV seropositivity in Caucasian and African-American children.

What next?: Accept after minor essential revisions

Level of interest: An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

Quality of written English: Acceptable

Statistical review: Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

Declaration of competing interests:

I declare that I have no competing interests